

Army, he joined Chabot College as an adjunct faculty member teaching political science, while serving as an assistant administrative analyst in the education section of the Legislative Analyst's Office in Sacramento. In 1970, he became the coordinator of Evening and Extension Operations at Chabot College. His warm, supportive manner was felt throughout the campus by faculty, staff and students. After 5 years, Don then became the assistant dean of instruction for Evening and Extension Operations at Chabot College's Valley Campus in Livermore. It was here that Don focused his talents on shaping the vision he shared with other college officials: a college that would serve the Tri-Valley. His hard work, dedication, and ability to dream helped establish Las Positas College. In 1992, he accepted the position of dean of Academic Services at the College, and in 1994 the position converted to the vice president of Academic Services.

Don's talent and wisdom extend beyond community college curriculum and instruction. He has used his skills to create community partnerships to benefit students, the college, and the community. He has been a driving force behind the Tri-Valley Educational Collaborative, which brings together business and education leaders to address issues of mutual interest.

Above and beyond his accomplishments at the colleges of Chabot and Las Positas, Don is revered for his compassionate nature, his ability to know when to lead and when to follow, and his sense of humor. While Don's skills and knowledge will be greatly missed and will leave a void at the college, it is his love of the college, students, faculty, and staff that will be missed the most.

Mr. Speaker, I wish Don Milanese the best of luck in retirement. I hope he finds joy in this next chapter of his life in equal measure to the joy he has given his colleagues in his working life.

A TRIBUTE TO THE PHILADELPHIA MURAL ARTS PROGRAM AND THE SOUTH PHILLY MUSICIANS MURAL

HON. ROBERT A. BRADY

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 7, 2005

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the Philadelphia Mural Arts Program, which will dedicate the new South Philadelphia musicians mural at 9th and Wharton Streets in my district on Saturday, October 8. As everyone knows, Philadelphia has long been one of the capitals of popular culture. This mural will honor seven of the icons of that culture, Jerry Blavat, Al Martino, Frankie Avalon, Fabian, Chubby Checker, Bobby Rydell and Eddie Fisher.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud that this mural will include one of the pioneers of rock and roll, my dear friend Jerry Blavat. Jerry was attracted to the music business because of his love for the music, not for fame or wealth. He was a dancer on the original Bandstand television program, hosted by Bob Horn. He became a favorite with the viewers and rose to

the head of the coveted "Committee," the group of teens responsible for aiding Horn in the direction of the show. Jerry got into radio in 1962 and soon was given the title "The Geator With The Heater." He soon coupled his growing popularity on the air, which by 1963 resulted in regional syndication of his program on small stations throughout the Delaware Valley from Atlantic City to Allentown, with appearances off the air at dances, clubs and events. It was not unusual for Blavat to see 5,000 kids a week in person in the mid sixties, nor too much of a stretch to say he would remember 3,000 of their names the following week. His appearances became so frequent that for a time he needed to use a helicopter just to make it on time from one gig to the next. Today the helicopter is gone, but the frantic schedule is still in place. Throughout the year, he can be found somewhere on virtually any night, and in the summer months he is in weekend residence at Memories At Margate, the New Jersey Shore's hottest night spot which he has owned and operated since 1972.

Al Martino will celebrate his 68th birthday on October 7. The son of Italian immigrants, Martino worked as a bricklayer in his father's construction business before being encouraged to become a singer by his friend Mario Lanza. After singing in local clubs, and winning Arthur Godfrey's Talent Scouts, he recorded "Here In My Heart" for the small BBS record label. It shot to No. 1 in the U.S. chart, and sold over a million copies. This disc was also the first ever record to top the New Musical Express UK listings, inaugurated in 1952. He continued his illustrious career on both stage and screen.

Frankie Avalon was the first and most successful of the teen idols from Philadelphia. He was encouraged to perform from the time he was a child, beginning from when he was tutored on the trumpet by his father. By the time he was 12, he had joined Rocco and the Saints, a dance band that featured another boy from the CR Club, drummer Bobby Rydell. The combo played parish bazaars, shows at the Sons of Italy Hall, weekend sock hops in school gyms, and weekend dances at teen clubs. "Venus" was Avalon's biggest hit selling more than a million copies in the spring of 1959. Three more million sellers in a row, "Bobby Sox To Stockings," "Just Ask Your Heart," and "Why" followed.

In 1960, he co-starred with Alan Ladd in "Guns of the Timberland" and appeared in John Wayne's "Alamo." Appearing in a number of other films Avalon did not have a starring role until 1963's "Drums of Africa." In the early sixties there was a nationwide surfing craze and Hollywood did a number of movies on the subject. Avalon, along with Annette Funicello, were leading stars in these movies. Starting in 1963 he appeared in "Beach Party," "Muscle Beach," "Beach Blanket Bingo," etc.

Mr. Speaker, Avalon's friend, Fabian was an overnight singing sensation, a film star with over 30 films to his credit and the producer of his own concert series. Fabian Forte was actually discovered at the age of 14 sitting on his front steps in Philadelphia. At 15, he won the Silver Award as "The Most Promising Male Vocalist of 1958." By the time he was 18, he had recorded dozens of hit singles, eight al-

bums and earned gold records for "Turn Me Loose" and "Tiger" and a gold album for "The Fabulous Fabian." In 1959, Fabian made his screen debut in "Hound Dog Man" opposite Carol Lynley. His role as a homicidal maniac in a TV production entitled "A Lion Walks Among Us" directed by Robert Altman solidly established his credentials as a versatile and powerful actor. His impressive acting credits include featured roles with John Wayne, James Stewart, Jack Palance, Tuesday Weld, George Segal and Karen Black.

Chubby Checker was born in South Carolina, but grew up in South Philadelphia. By the time he entered high school, he had learned to play the piano at Settlement Music School. In June of 1959, Chubby recorded "The Twist." Fourteen months later, in the summer of 1960, "The Twist" was not only the No. 1 song but it introduced the concept of "dancing apart to the beat." Mr. Speaker, Chubby Checker accomplished many "firsts" in the record industry. He is the only artist to have 5 albums in the top 12 all at once; the only artist to have a song to be No. 1 twice—"The Twist" and the only artist to have nine double-sided hits.

Bobby Rydell, unlike many of the other Teen Idols, was a genuine musician. At the age of 4 or 5, Bobby used to sit in front of the TV set trying to impersonate performers like Louis Prima, Milton Berle, and Johnny Ray. His father recognized Bobby's talent and encouraged him to pursue a show business career. At 5 he began taking lessons on the drums. Three years later he was an accomplished cabaret performer, playing drums and doing imitations. At 9, he was a regular on Paul Whiteman's television show that was broadcast from Philadelphia and performed on it for 3 years. By the time he was a teen, he was playing drums in a dance band Rocco and the Saints. Rydell's million seller, "Wild One" was released in early in 1960. "Swingin' School" b/w "Ding-A-Ling" was a springtime hit and third million seller. That summer "Volare" was released. The song had been pulled from a previous unsuccessful session of songs in a big band style to introduce Rydell to an older audience.

Mr. Speaker, Eddie Fisher received his first wide exposure as frequent guest performer on Eddie Cantor's early-fifties TV broadcasts. Later responsible for million-selling records during the fifties, including "Any Time," his signature song, "O My Papa," and many others. In 1953 Eddie Fisher was given his own 15-minute TV show called "Coke Time," sponsored by the Coca-Cola company. This show proved to be so popular that Coke then offered Eddie a \$1 million contract to be their national spokesperson. A deal of that magnitude was almost unheard of at this time and helped push Fisher towards being one of the most popular singers by 1954. At the height of his popularity, during the 1950s, Fisher was, along with Perry Como and Elvis Presley, RCA Victor's top-selling pop vocalist. His many hits during this period, all well remembered, include: "Anytime," his first big hit, "Oh, My Papa," "Wish You Were Here," "I Need You Now," "Dungaree Doll," "I'm Walking Behind You," "Heart," "Games That Lovers Play" and "Somebody Like You."